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RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR PRIORITY  
RUEAHQA/CSAF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
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RHMFISS/USFJ PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 TOKYO 001881

SIPDIS

DOD FOR OSD/APSA -  
GREGSON/MITCHELL/SCHIFFER/HILL/BASALLA/ARAKEL IAN  
JOINT STAFF FOR J5 - MILLER  
STATE FOR EAP, PM/ISN  
PACOM FOR J00/J01/J5  
USFJ FOR J00/J01/J5  
USFK FOR J00/J01/J5

E.O. 12958: DECL: AFTER KOREAN REUNIFICATION  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [MARR](#) [MNUC](#) [KN](#) [KS](#) [JA](#)  
SUBJECT: PART 2 OF 4 -- ASD (APSA) GREGSON PARTICIPATES IN  
JULY 16-17 U.S.-JAPAN-ROK DEFENSE TRILATERAL TALKS

REF: A. 08 SECDEF 8291  
[1](#)B. TOKYO 1879

Classified By: James P. Zumwalt, Charge d'Affaires, a.i.; reasons 1.4 (b/d)

Please see Tokyo 1879 for part 1 of this cable.

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Trilateral Forward Development:  
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[1](#)13. (SBU) USFK C-5 Col Jon Sachrison provided a synopsis of his plenary brief on the July 8-10 multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) conference and table top exercise hosted by USFK in Seoul (additional details in para 45).

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Way Ahead:  
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[1](#)14. (S) ASD Gregson concurred with Takamizawa's assertion that the DTT ought not to be predicated on the DPRK problem and should continue as a process for bringing the three governments' respective capabilities and expertise together for addressing common objectives and interests. Gregson raised three proposals as "way ahead" projects: a trilateral chiefs of defense (CHOD) meeting with a secure video teleconference (SVTC); a track-1 trilateral cooperation seminar at the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS); and reciprocal exercise observation, involving ROK observation of portions of the January 2010 KEEN EDGE exercise in Japan, and Japanese observation of portions of KEY RESOLVE/FOAL EAGLE in March 2010. The Japanese side supported all three proposals, noting potential sensitivities from the ROK delegation. Takamizawa commented that KEEN EDGE

participation by relevant Japanese ministries and agencies has been expanding over the years and that ROK participation is a natural part of such expansion.

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U.S.-ROK BILATERAL MEETING  
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¶15. (S) In the U.S.-ROK bilateral preparatory meeting immediately following the U.S.-Japan bilateral meeting, Deputy Minister of Defense Kim Sang-ki stated that the ROK government wants to develop the DTT based on the bedrock of strong U.S.-ROK bilateral cooperation. ASD Gregson conveyed the U.S. Government's appreciation for continued close cooperation with the ROK government in response to North Korea's recent activities. The U.S. delegation, he said, sought to achieve three objectives during the plenary session's discussions on North Korea: a shared situational understanding of the security situation; recognition of mutual goals and priorities in response to the North Korean threat; and discussion of areas to sustain and improve on the trilateral front, particularly in terms of strategic communication and operational coordination.

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Response to DPRK:  
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¶16. (S) DM Kim queried whether the issue of additional North Korea sanctions was discussed at the recent U.S.-China defense cooperation talks and whether the U.S.-Russia summit meeting had led to any conclusions on the DPRK issue. He also sought U.S. views on Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj's stated desire to help resolve the DPRK nuclear issue, adding that ROK Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee will visit Mongolia in late July to discuss information sharing and the DPRK. DASD Schiffer responded there was no further clarity on China's DPRK policy in the U.S.-China talks, but the U.S. Government continues to seek ways to influence Beijing's decision-making process on North Korean issues. ASD Gregson emphasized the need for Pyongyang to return to diplomacy, underscoring the recent G8 summit communiqué's strong condemnation of the DPRK's behavior. He explained that the U.S. Government has been working closely with the Mongolians since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom and welcomes all diplomatic contributions to resolving the DPRK nuclear issue.

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National Defense Strategies:  
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¶17. (S) ASD Gregson underscored the importance of continued bilateral consultations between the United States and the ROK on their respective strategic review processes. He added that the U.S. Government wants to discuss in the fall any useful recommendations from the QDR on strengthening U.S. force posture in the region, possibly in conjunction with Secretary Gates' visit to the region. Consistent with the discussions in the earlier U.S.-Japan bilateral meeting, DASD Schiffer outlined the QDR's four primary issue areas (para 8). DM Kim highlighted that the language on the U.S. nuclear umbrella and extended deterrence outlined in the Joint Vision Statement from the June 16 U.S.-ROK Summit was useful in allaying the Korean public's concerns regarding North Korea's recent provocative actions. It would be of great importance to have these kinds of assurances incorporated into the QDR's contents, Kim said.

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Missile Defense:  
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¶18. (S) USFJ Deputy J-5 Lt Col Scott Burnside touched upon the lessons learned from the July 3-4 DPRK missile launches and the possibility of increased trilateral cooperation. PACOM J-5 Director MajGen Alles proposed trilateral observation of a U.S. ballistic missile defense test shot as a possible first step to initiating policy-level discussions on missile defense among the three governments. DASD Schiffer said the pace of such dialogue would not exceed the ROK government's comfort level. DM Kim stated that he would review the U.S. proposal upon his return to Seoul.

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Information Security:  
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¶19. (S) ASD Gregson remarked that the DTT Working Group had proposed during its March 20 meeting in Honolulu a new discussion on information security for the DTT plenary, and emphasized the importance of cooperation on information security, as it is a foundational element for other forms of trilateral cooperation. He proposed that it may be time for the three countries to think about the advantages of pursuing

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a trilateral agreement on information sharing. DM Kim recounted that Secretary Gates had highlighted the importance of a common understanding on information protection during the trilateral defense ministerial on the margins of the May 30 Shangri-La Dialogue. He said the ROK government would consider the U.S. suggestion, recommending that trilateral information sharing begin slowly and proceed "step by step." Kim added that the ROK government understands the importance of information security and that the Ministry of National Defense has re-educated its staff in the wake of recent leaks. Moreover, the ROK delegation wants to include cyber defense as an agenda topic in next year's DTT, Kim noted.

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Counter-piracy:  
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¶20. (C) DM Kim expressed the ROK government's gratitude for the active support from U.S. forces for the Chung-Hae Unit's counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden, noting that the ROK Navy Destroyer Dae-Jo-Yeong left port on July 16 and will commence operations on August 22. Joint Staff J-5's COL Miller solicited the ROK's assistance in encouraging Japan to join CTF (Combined Task Force) 151. Kim stated he will support the U.S. position.

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Way Ahead:  
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¶21. (S) DM Kim responded favorably to the proposals for a trilateral CHOD meeting and a trilateral track-1 dialogue at APCSS (para 14). He cautioned, however, that the ROK government's ability to engage in reciprocal military observer exchanges with Japan on bilateral exercises with U.S. forces is limited due to domestic political sensitivities in South Korea related to lingering bilateral issues, including territorial disputes over the Dokdo/Takeshima islets. He added that Korean dailies had printed front-page reports on the issue that morning. He also cited the lack of an information sharing agreement between Korea and Japan as an issue preventing such exchanges. Emphasizing that ROK-Japan relations are improving, Kim stated that he will review the proposal carefully upon returning to Korea.

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DTT TRILATERAL PLENARY  
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Response to North Korea: ROK Brief  
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¶22. (S) MND Director for Defense Planning Col Jang Hyuk outlined the ROK assessment of the regional security situation, focusing on the DPRK's long-term goal to ensure regime succession and strengthen its economy by 2012. Col Jang asserted that the DPRK's objectives are three-fold: to maintain regime stability, to obtain security assurances and economic aid from the United States, and to gain the upper hand in inter-Korean relations. On the political front, Kim Jong-Il (KJI) has been making more public appearances despite his ailing health, possibly to prepare the North Korean masses for further difficulties. On the economic front, the

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DPRK is mobilizing for reconstruction. Finally, the North Korean military has been strengthening its combat posture, Jang added.

¶23. (S) Col Jang stated that the ROK expects the DPRK to launch additional ICBMs and provoke military conflict along the NLL or DMZ, but views actions risking "all-out-war" as unlikely. He stressed that the ROK military is prepared to respond to any North Korean aggression. Underscoring the linkage of U.S.-ROK C4I systems, Jang lauded improved ROK interagency cooperation and consistent responses to DPRK provocations. Nevertheless, Jang remarked, improved joint assessment and response systems, as well as increased intelligence sharing is needed. He also stressed the need to create a trilateral strategy for North Korea, which would include common recognition of the need for fundamental resolution of the DPRK threat and plans for addressing the implications of leadership succession in North Korea. In the trilateral context, Jang suggested the need to reinforce intelligence sharing systems, establish consultation channels for coordination of political strategy and strategic communication on DPRK provocations.

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Response to North Korea: Japan Brief  
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¶24. (S) MOD Strategic Planning Office Deputy Director Takahashi assessed the DPRK's recent ballistic missile and nuclear tests and reviewed Japan's responses and suggestions for managing the DPRK, including recommendations for trilateral cooperation. The Japanese government believes that the DPRK may have tied the timing of the tests to Kim Jong-il's succession process. It is also possible, however, that Pyongyang had proceeded with the tests according to a predetermined research and development schedule, while using the succession issue intentionally to confuse the international community. The DPRK will continue to escalate the situation for some time, but will eventually return to negotiations because it cannot escalate the situation indefinitely while maintaining regime stability, Takahashi said. North Korea is not likely, however, to denuclearize, given: the limited extent to which the United States, Japan, and ROK can exert pressure; the "soft" response by China, which undermines all other parties' efforts to squeeze North Korea; and the DPRK's expectation of eventual concessions by the United States and others. The Japanese government, Takahashi added, foresees a deadlocked situation with an associated risk of sudden regime collapse, based on a simple comparison of North Korea's potential gains from continuing its nuclear program versus its risks.

ZUMWALT